

the forehead, like other Burmese dignitaries, including the king himself, a golden plate inscribed with his titles, and a gold crescent set with circles of large gems between the eyes. Large silver tassels hang in front of his ears, and he is harnessed with bands of gold and crimson set with large bosses of pure gold. He is a regular estate of the realm, having a Woon, or minister, of his own, four gold umbrellas, the white umbrellas which are peculiar to royalty, and a suite of thirty attendants. The Burmese remove their shoes on entering his palace. He has an appanage, or territory, assigned to him to "eat," like other princes of the Empire. In Burney's time it was the rich cotton district of Taroup Myo.

The present king never rides the

white elephant; but his uncle used to do so frequently, acting as his own mahout, which was one of the royal accomplishments of the ancient Indian kings.

"The importance attached to the possession of a white elephant," says Captain Yule, "is traceable to the Buddhist system. A white elephant of certain wonderful endowments is one of the seven precious things the possession of which marks the *Maha chakravartti Raja*, 'the great wheel-turning king,' the holy and universal sovereign, a character who appears once in a cycle, at the period when the waxing and waning term of human life has reached its maximum of an *asankhya* in duration. Hence the white elephant is the ensign of universal sovereignty."

## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A QUACK.

### IN TWO PARTS.

#### PART I.

AT this present moment of time I am what the doctors call an interesting case, and am to be found in bed No. 10, Ward II. Massachusetts General Hospital. I am told that I have what is called Addison's Disease, — and that it is this pleasing malady which causes me to be covered with large blotches of a dark mulatto tint, such as I suppose would make me peculiarly acceptable to a Massachusetts constituency, if my legs were only strong enough to enable me to run for Congress. However, it is a rather grim subject to joke about, because, if I believe the doctor who comes around every day and thumps me, and listens to my chest with as much pleasure as if I was music all through, — I say, if I believed him, I should suppose I was going to die. The fact is, I don't believe him at all. Some of these days I shall

take a turn and get about again, but meanwhile it is rather dull for a stirring, active person to have to lie still and watch myself getting big brown and yellow spots all over me, like a map that has taken to growing.

The man on my right has consumption, smells of cod-liver oil, and coughs all night. The man on my left is a Down-Easter, with a liver which has struck work; looks like a human pumpkin; and how he contrives to whittle jack-straws all day, and eat as he does, I can't understand. I have tried reading and tried whittling, but they don't either of them satisfy me, so that yesterday I concluded to ask the doctor if he could n't suggest some other amusement.

I waited until he had gone through the ward, and then I seized my chance, and asked him to stop a moment.

"Well," said he, "what do you want?"

"Something to do, Doctor."

He thought a little, and then replied: "I'll tell you what to do; I think if you were to write out a plain account of your life, it would be pretty well worth reading, and perhaps would serve to occupy you for a few days at least. If half of what you told me last week be true, you must be about as clever a scamp as there is to be met with, and I suppose you would just as lief put it on paper as talk it."

"Pretty nearly," said I; "I think I will try it, Doctor."

After he left I lay awhile thinking over the matter. I knew well enough that I was what the world calls a scamp, and I knew also that I had got little good out of the fact. If a man is what people call virtuous, and fails in life, he gets credit at least for the virtue; but when a man is a rascal, and breaks down at the trade, somehow or other people don't credit him with the intelligence he has put into the business,—and this I call hard. I never had much experience of virtue being its own reward; but I do know that, when rascality is left with nothing but the contemplation of itself for comfort, it is by no means refreshing. Now this is just my present position; and if I did not recall with satisfaction the energy and skill with which I did my work, I should be nothing but disgusted at the melancholy spectacle of my failure. I suppose that I shall at least find occupation in reviewing all this, and I think, therefore, that I shall try to give a plain and straightforward account of the life I have led, and the various devices by which I have sought to get my share of the money of my countrymen.

I want it to be clearly understood, at the beginning, that, in what I may have to say, I shall stick severely to the truth, without any overstrained regard for my neighbors' feelings. In fact, I shall have some little satisfaction when I do come a little heavy on corn or bunyon, because for the past two years

the whole world appears to have been engaged in trotting over mine with as much certainty as if there were no other standing-room left in creation.

I shall be rather brief about my early life, which possesses little or no interest.

I was born in Newark, New Jersey, and am therefore what those dreary Pennsylvanians call a Jersey Yankee, and sometimes a Spaniard, as pleases them best. My father was a respectable physician in large practice, too busy to look after me. My mother died too early for me to remember her at all. An old aunt who took her place as our housekeeper indulged me to the utmost, and I thus acquired a taste for having my own way and the best of everything, which has stuck to me through life. I do not remember when it was that I first began to pilfer, but it must have been rather early in life. Indeed, I believe I may say that, charitably speaking, which is the only way to speak of one's self, I was what the doctors call a kleptomaniac,—which means that, when I could not get a thing in any other way, I took it. As to education, I took very little of that, but I had, notwithstanding, a liking for reading, and especially for light literature. At the age of sixteen I was sent to Nassau Hall, best known as Princeton College; but, for reasons which I need not state very fully, I did not remain beyond the close of the Junior year. The causes which led to my removal were not the usual foolish scrapes in which college lads indulge. Indeed, I never have been guilty of any of those wanton pieces of wickedness which injure the feelings of others while they lead to no useful result. When I left to return home, I set myself seriously to reflect upon the necessity of greater caution in following out my inclinations, and from that time forward I have steadily avoided the vulgar vice of directly possessing myself of objects to which I could show no legal title. My father was justly indignant at the results of my college career; and, according to my aunt, his sorrow had some effect in shortening



his life, which ended rather suddenly within the year.

I was now about nineteen years old, and, as I remember, a middle-sized, well-built young fellow, with large, dark eyes, a slight mustache, and, I have been told, with very good manners, and a somewhat humorous turn. Besides these advantages, my guardian held in trust for me about three thousand dollars. After some consultation between us, it was resolved that I should study medicine.

Accordingly I set out for Philadelphia, with many good counsels from my aunt and guardian. I look back upon this period as a turning-point in my life. I had seen enough of the world already to know that, if you can succeed honestly, it is by far the pleasantest way; and I really believe that, if I had not been endowed with such a fatal liking for all the good things of life, I might have lived along as reputably as most men. This, however, is, and always has been, my difficulty, and I suppose that I am not therefore altogether responsible for the incidents to which it gave rise. Most men also have some ties in life. I had only one, a little sister, now about ten years of age, for whom I have always had more or less affection, but who was of course too much my junior to exert over me that beneficial control which has saved so many men from evil courses. She cried a good deal when we parted, and this, I think, had a very good effect in strengthening my resolution to do nothing which could get me into trouble.

The janitor of the College to which I went directed me to a boarding-house, where I engaged a small, third-story room, which I afterwards shared with Mr. Chaucer of Jawjah, as he called the State which he had the honor to represent.

In this very remarkable abode I spent the next two winters; and finally graduated, along with two hundred more, at the close of my two years of study. I should also have been one year in a physician's office as a student, but this regulation is very

easily evaded. As to my studies, the less said the better. I attended the quizzes, as they call them, pretty closely, and, being of quick and retentive memory, was thus enabled to dispense, for the most part, with the six or seven lectures a day which duller men found it necessary to follow.

Dissecting struck me as a rather nasty business for a gentleman, and on this account I did just as little as was absolutely essential. In fact, if a man takes his tickets, and pays the dissection fees, nobody troubles himself as to whether or not he does any more than this. A like evil exists as to graduation; whether you merely squeeze through, or pass with credit, is a thing which is not made public, so that I had absolutely nothing to stimulate my ambition.

The astonishment with which I learned of my success was shared by the numerous Southern gentlemen who darkened the floors, and perfumed with tobacco the rooms of our boarding-house. In my companions, during the time of my studies so called, as in other matters in life, I was somewhat unfortunate. All of them were Southern gentlemen, with more money than I. They all carried great sticks, usually sword-canes, and most of them bowie-knives; also they delighted in dress-coats, long hair, felt hats, and very tight boots, swore hideously, and glared at every woman they met as they strolled along with their arms affectionately over the shoulders of their companions. They hated the "Nawth," and cursed the Yankees, and honestly believed that the leanest of them was a match for any half-dozen of the bulkiest of Northerners. I must also do them the justice to say that they were quite as ready to fight as to brag, which, by the way, is no meagre statement. With these gentry, for whom I retain a respect which has filled me with regret at the recent course of events, I spent a good deal of my large leisure. We were what the more respectable students of both sections called a hard crowd; though

what we did, or how we did it, little concerns us here, except that, owing to my esteem for chivalric blood and breeding, I was led into many practices and excesses which cost my guardian much distress and myself a good deal of money.

At the close of my career as a student, I found myself aged twenty-one years, and owner of twelve hundred dollars,—the rest of my small estate having disappeared variously within the last two years. After my friends had gone to their homes in the South, I began to look about me for an office, and finally settled upon a very good room in one of the down-town localities of the Quaker City. I am not specific as to number and street, for reasons which may hereafter appear. I liked the situation on various accounts. It had been occupied by a doctor; the terms were reasonable; and it lay on the skirts of a good neighborhood; while below it lived a motley population, amongst which I expected to get my first patients and such fees as were to be had. Into this new home I moved my medical text-books, a few bones, and myself. Also I displayed in the window a fresh sign, upon which was distinctly to be read:—

“DR. ELIAS SANDCRAFT.

Office hours, 7 to 9 A. M., 3 to 6  
P. M., 7 to 9 P. M.”

I felt now that I had done my fair share towards attaining a virtuous subsistence, and so I waited tranquilly, and without undue enthusiasm, to see the rest of the world do its part in the matter. Meanwhile I read up on all sorts of imaginable cases, stayed at home all through my office hours, and at intervals explored the strange section of the town which lay to the south of my office. I do not suppose there is anything like it elsewhere. It was then, and still is, a nest of endless grog-shops, brothels, slop-shops, and low lodging-houses. You may dine here for a penny off of soup made from the refuse meats of the rich,

gathered at back gates by a horde of half-naked children, who all tell varieties of one woful tale. Here, too, you may be drunk at five cents, and lodge for three, with men, women, and children of all colors lying about you. It is this hideous mixture of black and white and yellow wretchedness which makes the place so peculiar. The blacks predominate, and have mostly that swollen, reddish, dark skin, the sign in this race of habitual drunkenness. Of course only the lowest whites are here,—rag-pickers, pawnbrokers, old-clothes-men, thieves, and the like. All of this, as it came before me, I viewed with mingled disgust and philosophy. I hated filth, but I understood that society has to stand on somebody, and I was only glad that I was not one of the undermost and worst-squeezed bricks.

You will hardly believe me, but I had waited a month without having been called upon by a single patient. At last the policeman on the beat brought me a fancy man, with a dog bite. This patient recommended me to his brother, the keeper of a small pawnbroking shop, and by very slow degrees I began to get stray patients who were too poor to indulge in up-town doctors. I found the police very useful acquaintances; and, by a drink or a cigar now and then, I got most of the cases of cut heads and the like at the next station-house. These, however, were the aristocrats of my practice; the bulk of my patients were soap-fat-men, rag-pickers, oystermen, hose-house bummers, and worse, with other and nameless trades, men and women, white, black, or mulatto. How they got the levies and quarters with which I was reluctantly paid, I do not know; that indeed was none of my business. They expected to pay, and *they* came to me in preference to the dispensary doctor two or three squares away, who seemed to me to live in the lanes and alleys about us. Of course he received no pay except experience, since the dispensaries in the Quaker City, as a rule, do not give salaries to their



doctors; and the vilest of the poor will prefer a pay doctor, if he can get one, to one of these disinterested gentlemen who are at everybody's call and beck. I am told that most young doctors do a large amount of poor practice, as it is called; but, for my own part, I think it better for both parties when the doctor insists upon some compensation being made to him. This has been usually my own custom, and I have not found reason to regret it.

Notwithstanding my strict attention to my own interests, I have been rather sorely dealt with by fate, upon several occasions, where, so far as I could see, I was vigilantly doing everything in my power to keep myself out of trouble or danger. I may as well relate one of them, merely as an illustration of how little value a man's intellect may be, when fate and the prejudices of the mass of men are against him.

One evening late, I myself answered a ring at the bell, and found a small black boy on the steps, a shoeless, hatless little wretch, with curled darkness for hair, and teeth like new tombstones. It was pretty cold, and he was relieving his feet by standing first on one and then on the other. He did not wait for me to speak.

"Hi, sah, Missy Barker she say to come quick away, sah, to Numbah 709 Bedford Street."

The locality did not look like pay, but it was hard to say in this quarter, because sometimes you found a well-to-do "brandy-snifter,"—local for gin-shop,—or a hard-working "leather-jeweller,"—ditto for shoemaker,—with next door, in a house no better or worse, dozens of human rats for whom every police trap in the city was constantly set.

With a doubt, then, in my mind as to whether I should find a good patient or some mean nigger, I sought out the place to which I had been directed. I did not like its looks; but I blundered up an alley, and into a back room, where I fell over somebody, and was cursed and told to lie down and keep easy, or somebody, meaning the man stumbled over, would make me. At last

I lit on a staircase which led into the alley, and, after some inquiry, got as high as the garret. People hereabouts did not know one another, or did not want to know, so that it was of little avail to ask questions. At length I saw a light through the cracks in the attic door, and walked in. To my amazement, the first person I saw was a woman of about thirty-five, in pearl-gray Quaker dress,—one of your calm, good-looking people. She was seated on a stool beside a straw mattress, upon which lay a black woman. There were three others crowded close around a small stove, which was red-hot,—an unusual spectacle in this street. Altogether a most nasty den.

As I came in, the little Quaker woman got up, and said, "I took the liberty of sending for thee to look at this poor woman. I am afraid she has the small-pox. Will thee be so kind as to look at her?" And with this she held down the candle towards the bed.

"Good gracious!" said I hastily, seeing how the creature was speckled, "I did n't understand this, or I would not have come. Best let her alone, miss," I added, "there's nothing to be done for these cases."

Upon my word, I was astonished at the little woman's indignation. She said just those things which make you feel as if somebody had been calling you names or kicking you. Was I a doctor? Was I a man? and so on. However, I never did fancy the small-pox, and what could a fellow get by doctoring wretches like these? So I held my tongue and went away. About a week afterwards, I met Evans, the Dispensary man.

"Halloa!" says he. "Doctor, you made a nice mistake about that darky at No. 709 Bedford Street the other night. She had nothing but measles after all."

"Of course I knew," said I, laughing; "but you don't think I was going into dispensary trash, do you?"

"I should think not," says Evans.

I learned afterwards that this Miss Barker had taken an absurd fancy to

the man because he had doctored the darky, and would not let the Quakeress pay him. The end was, that when I wanted to get a vacancy in the Southwark Dispensary, where they do pay the doctors, Miss Barker was malignant enough to take advantage of my oversight by telling the whole story to the board; so that Evans got in, and I was beaten.

You may be pretty sure that I found rather slow the kind of practice I have described, and began to look about for chances of bettering myself. In this sort of location these came up now and then; and as soon as I got to be known as a reliable man, I began to get the peculiar sort of practice I wanted. Notwithstanding all my efforts, however, I found myself at the close of three years with all my means spent, and just able to live meagrely from hand to mouth, which by no means suited a person of my luxurious turn. Six months went by, and I was worse off than ever,—two months in arrears of rent, and numerous other debts to cigar-shops and liquor-dealers. Now and then, some good job, such as a burglar with a cut head, helped me up for a while; but on the whole, I was like Slider Downeyhyle in poor Neal's *Charcoal Sketches*, and "kept going downer and downer the more I tried not to." Something must be done.

One night, as I was debating with myself as to how I was to improve my position, I heard a knock on my shutter, and, going to the door, let in a broad-shouldered man with a white face and a great hooked nose. He wore a heavy black beard and mustache, and looked like the wolf in the pictures of *Red Riding-Hood* which I had seen as a child.

"Your name's Sandcraft?" said the man, shaking the snow over everything. "Set down, want to talk to you."

"That's my name. What can I do for you?" said I.

The man looked around the room rather scornfully, at the same time throwing back his coat, and displaying a red neckerchief and a huge garnet

pin. "Guess you're not overly rich," he said.

"Not especially," said I.

"Know—Simon Stagers?"

"Can't say I do," said I. Simon was a burglar who had blown off two fingers when mining a safe, and whom I had attended while he was hiding.

"Can't say you do," says the wolf.

"Well, you can lie, and no mistake. Come now, Doctor, Simon says you're safe, and I want to do a leetle plain talk with you." With this he laid ten eagles on the table; I put out my hand instinctively.

"Let 'em alone," cried the man sharply. "They're easy earned, and ten more like em."

"For doing what?" said I.

The man paused a moment, looked around him, eyed me furtively, and finally loosened his cravat with a hasty pull. "You're the coroner," said he.

"I! What do you mean?"

"Yes, you,—the coroner, don't you understand?" and so saying he shoved the gold pieces towards me.

"Very good," said I, "we will suppose I'm the coroner."

"And being the coroner," said he, "you get this note, which requests you to call at No. 9 Blank Street to examine the body of a young man which is supposed—only supposed, you see—to have—well, to have died under suspicious circumstances."

"Go on," said I.

"No," he returned, "not till I know how you like it. Stagers and another knows it; and it would n't be very safe for you to split, besides not making nothing out of it; but what I say is this. Do you like the business of coroner?"

Now I did not like it, but two hundred in gold was life to me just then; so I said, "Let me hear the whole of it first."

"That's square enough," said the man; "my wife's got"—correcting himself with a little shiver—"my wife had a brother that's been cuttin' up rough, because, when I'd been up too late, I handled her a leetle hard now



and again. About three weeks ago, he threatened to fetch the police on me for one or two little things Stagers and I done together. Luckily, he fell sick with a typhoid just then; but he made such a thunderin' noise about opening safes, and what he done, and I done, and so on, that I did n't dare to have any one about him. When he began to mend, I gave him a little plain talk about this business of threatening to bring the police on us, and next day I caught him a saying something to my wife about it. The end of it was, he was took worse next morning, and—well he died yesterday. Now what does his sister do, but writes a note, and gives it to a boy in the alley to put in the post. Luckily, Stagers happened to be round; and after the boy got away a bit, Bill bribes him with a quarter to give him the note, which was n't no less than a request to the coroner to come to our house to-morrow and make an examination, as foul play was suspected."

Here he paused. As for myself, I was cold all over. I was afraid to go on, and afraid to go back, besides which I did not doubt that there was a good deal of money in the case. "Of course," said I, "it's all nonsense; only I suppose you don't want the officers about, and a fuss, and that sort of thing."

"Exactly," said my friend, "you're the coroner; you take this note and come to my house. Says you, 'Mrs. File, are you the woman that wrote this note? because in that case I must examine the body.'"

"I see," said I; "she need n't know who I am, or anything else. But if I tell her it's all right, do you think she won't want to know why there ain't a jury, and so on?"

"Bless you," said the man, "the girl is n't over seventeen, and does n't know no more than her baby."

"I'll do it," said I, suddenly, for, as I saw, it involved no sort of risk; "but I must have three hundred dollars."

"And fifty," added the wolf, "if you do it well."

With this the man buttoned about him a shaggy gray overcoat, and took his leave without a single word in addition.

For the first time in my life I failed that night to sleep. I thought to myself at last that I would get up early, pack a few clothes, and escape, leaving my books to pay, as they might, my arrears of rent. Looking out of the window, however, in the morning, I saw Stagers prowling about the opposite pavement, and, as the only exit except the street door was an alleyway, which opened alongside of the front of the house, I gave myself up for lost. About ten o'clock I took my case of instruments, and started for File's house, followed, as I too well understood, by Stagers.

I knew the house, which was in a small street, by its closed windows and the craped bell, which I shuddered as I touched. However, it was too late to draw back, and I therefore inquired for Mrs. File. A young and haggard-looking woman came down, and led me into a small parlor, for whose darkened light I was thankful enough.

"Did you write me this note?" said I.

"I did," said the woman, "if you're the coroner. Joe, he's my husband, he's gone out to see about the funeral. I wish it was his, I do."

"What do you suspect?" said I.

"I'll tell you," she returned, in a whisper. "I think he was made away with. I think there was foul play. I think he was poisoned. That's what I think."

"I hope you may be mistaken," said I. "Suppose you let me see the body."

"You shall see it," she replied; and, following her, I went up stairs to a front chamber, where I found the corpse.

"Get it over soon," said the woman, with a strange firmness. "If there ain't no murder been done, I shall have to run for it. If there is," and her face set hard, "I guess I'll stay." With this she closed the door, and left me with the dead.

If I had known what was before me, I never should have gone into the thing at all. It looked a little better when I had opened a window, and let in plenty of light; for, although I was, on the whole, far less afraid of dead than living men, I had an absurd feeling that I was doing this dead man a distinct wrong, as if it mattered to the dead, after all. When the affair was over, I thought more of the possible consequences than of its relation to the dead man himself; but do as I would at the time, I was in a ridiculous tremor, and especially when, in going through the forms of a *post-mortem* dissection, I had to make the first cut through the skin. Of course, I made no examination of the internal organs. I wanted to know as little as possible about them, and to get done as soon as I could. Unluckily, however, the walls of the stomach had softened and given way, so that I could not help seeing, among the escaped contents of the stomach, numerous grains of a white powder, which I hastened to conceal from my sight by rapidly sewing up the incisions which I had made.

I am free to confess now that I was careful not to uncover the man's face, and that when it was over I backed to the door, and hastily escaped from the room. On the stairs opposite to me Mrs. File was seated, with her bonnet on, and a small bundle in her hand.

"Well," said she, rising as she spoke, and with a certain eagerness in her tones, "what killed him? Was it arsenic?"

"Arsenic, my good woman!" said I; "when a man has typhoid fever, he don't need poison to kill him."

"And you mean to say he was n't poisoned," said she, with more than a trace of disappointment in her voice, — "not poisoned at all?"

"No more than you are," said I. "If I had found any signs of foul play, I should have had a regular inquest. As it is, the less said about it the better; and the fact is, it would have been much wiser to have kept quiet at the beginning. I can't understand why

you should have troubled me about it at all."

"Neither I would," said she, "if I had n't been pretty sure. I guess now the sooner I leave, the better for me."

"As to that," I returned, "it is none of my business; but you may rest certain that you are mistaken about the cause of your brother's death."

As I left the house, whom should I meet but Dr. Evans. "Why, halloa!" said he; "called you in, have they? Who's sick?"

You may believe I was scared. "Mrs. File," said I, remembering with horror that I had forgotten to ask whether at any time the man had had a doctor.

"Bad lot," returned Evans; "I was sent for to see the brother when he was as good as dead."

"As bad as dead," I retorted, with a sickly effort at a joke. "What killed him?"

"I suppose one of the ulcers gave way, and that he died of the consequences. Perforation, you know, and that sort of thing. I thought of asking File for a *post*, but I did n't."

"Wish you luck of them. Good by."

I was greatly alarmed at this new incident, but my fears were somewhat quieted that evening when Stagers and the wolf appeared with the remainder of the money, and I learned that Mrs. File had fled from her home, and, as File thought likely, from the city also. A few months later, File himself disappeared, and Stagers found his way into the Penitentiary.

I felt, for my own part, that I had been guilty of more than one mistake, and that I had displayed throughout a want of intelligence for which I came near being punished very severely. I should have made proper inquiries before venturing on a matter so dangerous, and I ought also to have got a good fee from Mrs. File on account of my services as coroner. It served me, however, as a good lesson, but it was several months before I felt quite easy in mind. Meanwhile, money be-



came scarce once more, and I was driven to my wit's end to devise how I should continue to live as I had done. I tried, among other plans, that of keeping certain pills and other medicines, which I sold to my patients; but on the whole I found it better to send all my prescriptions to one druggist, who charged the patient ten or twenty per cent over the correct price, and handed this amount to me.

In some cases I am told the percentage is supposed to be a donation on the part of the apothecary; but I rather fancy the patient pays for it in the end. It is one of the absurd vagaries of the profession to discountenance the practice I have described, but I wish, for my part, I had never done anything worse or more dangerous. Of course it inclines a doctor to change his medicines a good deal, and to order them in large quantities, which is occasionally annoying to the poor; yet, as I have always observed, there is no poverty so painful as your own, so that in a case of doubt I prefer equally to distribute pecuniary suffering among many, rather than to concentrate it on myself.

About six months after the date of my rather annoying adventure, an incident occurred which altered somewhat, and for a time improved, my professional position. During my morning office-hour an old woman came in, and, putting down a large basket, wiped her face with a yellow cotton handkerchief first, and afterwards with the corner of her apron. Then she looked around uneasily, got up, settled her basket on her arm with a jerk, which decided the future of an egg or two, and remarked briskly, "Don't see no little bottles about; got to the wrong stall I guess. You ain't no homœopath doctor, are you?"

With great presence of mind, I replied, "Well, ma'am, that depends upon what you want. Some of my patients like one, and some like the other." I was about to add, "You pays your money and you takes your choice," but thought better of it, and

held my peace, refraining from classical quotation.

"Being as that's the case," said the old lady, "I'll just tell you my symptoms. You said you give either kind of medicine, did n't you?"

"Just so," I replied.

"Clams or oysters, whichever opens most lively, as my Joe says. Perhaps you know Joe,—tends the oyster-stand at stall No. 9."

No, I did not know Joe; but what were the symptoms?

They proved to be numerous, and included a stunnin' in the head, and a misery in the side, and a goin' on with bokin' after victuals.

I proceeded of course to apply a stethoscope over her ample bosom, though what I heard on this or similar occasions I should find it rather difficult to state. I remember well my astonishment in one instance, where, having unconsciously applied my instrument over a large chronometer in the watch-fob of a sea-captain, I concluded for a brief space that he was suffering from a rather remarkable displacement of the heart. As to the old lady, whose name was Checkers, and who kept an apple-stall near by, I told her that I was out of pills just then, but would have plenty next day. Accordingly I proceeded to invest a small amount at a place called a Homœopathic Pharmacy, which I remember amused me immensely.

A stout little German, with great silver spectacles, sat behind a counter containing numerous jars of white powders labelled concisely, Lach., Led., Onis., Op., Puls., etc., while behind him were shelves filled with bottles of what looked like minute white shot.

"I want some homœopathic medicine," said I.

"Vat kindst?" said my friend. "Vat you wants to cure?"

I explained at random that I wished to treat diseases in general.

"Vell, ve gifs you a case, mit a pooks";—and thereupon produced a large box containing bottles of small pills and powders, labelled variously

with the names of diseases, so that all you required was to use the headache or colic bottle in order to meet the needs of those particular maladies.

I was struck at first with the exquisite simplicity of this arrangement; but before purchasing, I happened luckily to turn over the leaves of a book, in two volumes, which lay on the counter, and was labelled, "Jahr—Manual." Opening at page 310, Vol. I., I lit upon Lachesis, which, on inquiry, proved to be snake-venom. This Mr. Jahr stated to be indicated in upwards of a hundred maladies. At once it occurred to me that Lach. was the medicine for my money, and that it was quite needless to waste cash on the box. I therefore bought a small jar of Lach. and a lot of little pills, and started for home.

My old woman proved a fast friend; and as she sent me numerous patients, I by and by altered my sign to "Homœopathic Physician and Surgeon," whatever that may mean, and was regarded by my medical brethren as a lost sheep, and by the little-pill doctors as one who had seen the error of his ways.

In point of fact, my new practice had decided advantages. All the pills looked and tasted alike, and the same might be said of the powders, so that I was never troubled by those absurd investigations into the nature of the remedies which some patients are prone to make. Of course I desired to get business, and it was therefore obviously unwise to give little pills of Lach. or Puls. or Sep., when a man distinctly needed full doses of iron, or the like. I soon discovered, however, that it was only necessary to describe cod-liver oil, for instance, as a diet, in order to make use of it where required. When a man got impatient over an ancient

ague, I usually found, too, that I could persuade him to let me try a good dose of quinine; while, on the other hand, there was a distinct pecuniary advantage in those cases of the shakes which could be made to believe that it was "best not to interfere with nature." I ought to add, that this kind of faith is uncommon among folks who carry hods or build walls.

For women who are hysterical, and go heart and soul into the business of being sick, I have found the little pills a most charming resort, because you cannot carry the refinement of symptoms beyond what my friend Jahr has done in the way of fitting medicines to them, so that, if I had been disposed honestly to practise this droll style of therapeutics, it had, as I saw, certain conveniences.

Another year went by, and I was beginning to prosper in my new mode of life. The medicines (being chiefly milk-sugar, with variations as to the labels) cost next to nothing; and, as I charged pretty well for both these and my advice, I was now able to start a gig, and also to bring my sister, a very pretty girl of fourteen years old, to live with me in a small house which I rented, a square from my old office.

This business of my sister's is one of the things I like the least to look back upon. When she came to me she was a pale-faced child, with large, mournful gray eyes, soft, yellow hair, and the promise of remarkable good looks. As to her attachment to me, it was something quite ridiculous. She followed me to the door when I went out, waited for me to come in, lay awake until she heard my step at night, and, in a word, hung around my neck like a kind of affectionate mill-stone.



## THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A QUACK.

## IN TWO PARTS.

## PART II.

I SOLEMNLY believe that I should have continued to succeed in the virtuous practice of my profession, if it had not happened that fate was once more unkind to me, by throwing in my path one of my old acquaintances. I had had a consultation one day with the famous homœopath, Dr. Zwanzig; and as we walked away we were busily discussing the case of a poor consumptive fellow who had previously lost a leg. In consequence of this defect, Dr. Zwanzig considered that the ten-thousandth of a grain of *Aur.\** would be an over-dose, and that it must be fractioned so as to allow for the departed leg, otherwise the rest of the man would be getting a leg-dose too much. I was particularly struck with this view of the case, but I was still more, and less pleasingly, impressed with the sight of my quondam patient, Stagers, who nodded to me familiarly from the opposite pavement.

I was not at all surprised when, that evening quite late, I found this worthy seated waiting in my office. I looked around uneasily, which was clearly understood by my friend, who retorted, "Ain't took nothin', Doc. You don't seem right awful glad to see me. You need n't be afraid, — I 've only fetched you a job, and a right good one too."

I replied, that I had my regular business, that I preferred he should get some one else, and pretty generally made Mr. Stagers conscious that I had had enough of him.

I did not ask him to sit down, and, just as I supposed him about to leave, he seated himself with a grin, remarking, "No use, Doc. Got to go into it this one time."

At this I naturally enough grew an-

gry, and used several rather violent phrases.

"No use, Doc," remarked Stagers.

Then I softened down, and laughed a little, treated the thing as a joke, whatever it was, for I dreaded to hear.

But Stagers was fate. Stagers was inevitable. "Won't do, Doc, — not even money would n't get you off."

"No?" said I interrogatively, and as coolly as I could, contriving at the same time to move towards the window. It was summer, the sashes were up, the shutters drawn in, and a policeman whom I knew was lounging opposite, as I had noticed when I entered. I would give Stagers a scare anyhow; charge him with theft,—anything but get mixed up with his kind again.

He must have understood me, the scoundrel, for in an instant I felt a cold ring of steel against my ear, and a tiger clutch on my cravat. "Sit down," he said; "what a fool you are. Guess you 've forgot that there coroner's business." Needless to say, I obeyed. "Best not try that again," continued my guest. "Wait a moment,"—and, rising, he closed the windows.

There was no resource left but to listen; and what followed I shall condense, rather than relate it in the language employed by my friend Mr. Stagers.

It appeared that another acquaintance, Mr. File, had been guilty of a cold-blooded and long-premeditated murder, for which he had been tried and convicted. He now lay in jail awaiting his execution, which was to take place at Carsonville, Ohio, one month after the date at which I heard of him anew. It seemed that, with Stagers and others, he had formed a band of counterfeiters in the West,

\* *Aurum*, used in religious melancholy; (see *Jahr*,) and not a bad remedy, it strikes me.

where he had thus acquired a fortune so considerable that I was amazed at his having allowed his passions to seduce him into unprofitable crime. In his agony he unfortunately thought of me, and had bribed Stagers largely in order that he might be induced to find me. When the narration had reached this stage, and I had been made fully to understand that I was now and hereafter under the sharp eye of Stagers and his friends, that, in a word, escape was out of the question, I turned on my tormentor.

"And what does all this mean?" I said; "what does File expect me to do?"

"Don't believe he exactly knows," said Stagers; "something or other to get him clear of hemp."

"But what stuff!" I replied. "How can I help him? What possible influence could I exert?"

"Can't say," answered Stagers imperturbably; "File has a notion you're most cunning enough for anything. Best try somethin', Doc."

"And what if I won't do it?" said I. "What does it matter to me, if the rascal swings or no?"

"Keep cool, Doc," returned Stagers, "I'm only agent in this here business. My principal, that's File, he says, 'Tell Sandcraft to find some way to get me clear. Once out, I give him ten thousand dollars. If he don't turn up something that'll suit, I'll blow about that coroner business, and break him up generally.'"

"You don't mean," said I, in a cold sweat,—"you don't mean that, if I can't do this impossible thing, he will inform on me?"

"Just so," returned Stagers. "Got a cigar, Doc?"

I only half heard him. What a frightful position. I had been leading a happy and an increasingly comfortable life,—no scrapes, and no dangers; and here, on a sudden, I had presented to me the alternative of saving a wretch from the gallows, or of spending unlimited years in a State penitentiary. As for the money, it became as dead

leaves for this once only in my life. My brain seemed to be spinning in its case; lights came and went before my eyes. In my ears were the sounds of waters. I grew weak all over.

"Cheer up a little," said Stagers. "Here, take a nip of whiskey. Things ain't at the worst, by a good bit. You just get ready, and we'll start by the morning train. Guess you'll try out something smart enough, as we travel along. Ain't got a heap of time to lose."

I was silent. A great anguish had me in its grip. I might writhe and bite as I would, it was to be all in vain. Hideous plans arose to my ingenuity, born of this agony of terror and fear. I could murder Stagers, but what good would that do. As to File, he was safe from my hand. At last I became too confused to think any longer. "When do we leave?" I said, feebly.

"At six to-morrow," he returned.

How I was watched and guarded, and how hurried over a thousand miles of rail to my fate, little concerns us now. I find it dreadful to recall it to memory. Above all, an aching eagerness for revenge upon the man who had caused me these sufferings predominated in my mind. Could I not fool the wretch and save myself? On a sudden an idea came to my consciousness, like a sketch on an artist's paper. Then it grew, and formed itself, became possible, probable, it seemed to me sure. "Ah," said I, "Stagers, give me something to eat and drink." I had not tasted food for two days.

Within a day or two after my arrival, I was enabled to see File in his cell,—on the plea of being a clergyman from his native place.

I found that I had not miscalculated my danger. The man did not appear to have the least idea as to how I was to help him. He only knew that I was in his power, and he used his control to insure that something more potent than friendship should be enlisted on his behalf. As the days went by, this behavior grew to be a frightful thing to witness. He threatened, flat-



tered, implored, offered to double the sum he had promised, if I would but save him. As for myself, I had gradually become clear as to my course of action, and only anxious to get through with the matter. At last, a few days before the time appointed for the execution, I set about explaining to File my plan of saving him. At first I found this a very difficult task; but as he grew to understand that any other escape was impossible, he consented to my scheme, which I will now briefly explain.

I proposed, on the evening before the execution, to make an opening in the man's windpipe, low down in the neck, and where he could conceal it by a loose cravat. As the noose would be above this point, I explained that he would be able to breathe through the aperture, and that, even if stupefied, he could easily be revived if we should be able to prevent his being hanged too long. My friend had some absurd misgivings lest his neck should be broken by the fall; but as to this I was able to reassure him, upon the best scientific authority. There were certain other and minor questions, as to the effects of sudden, nearly complete cessation of the supply of blood to the brain; but with these physiological refinements I thought it needlessly cruel to distract a man in his peculiar position. Perhaps I shall be doing injustice to my own intellect if I do not hasten to state that I had not the remotest belief in the efficacy of my plan for any purpose except to extricate me from a very uncomfortable position.

On the morning of the day before the execution, I made ready everything that I could possibly need. So far our plans, or rather mine, had worked to a marvel. Certain of File's old accomplices succeeded in bribing the hangman to shorten the time of suspension. Arrangements were made also to secure me two hours alone with the prisoner, so that nothing seemed to be wanting. I had assured File that I would not see him again previous to the operation, but during the morning

I was seized with a feverish impatience, which luckily prompted me to visit him once more. As usual, I was admitted readily, and nearly reached his cell, when I became aware from the sound of voices heard through the grating in the door that there was a visitor in the cell. "Who is with him?" I inquired of the warden.

"The doctor," he replied.

"Doctor?" I said. "What doctor?"

"O, the jail physician," he returned. "I was to come back in half an hour and let him out; but he's got a quarter to stay as yet. Shall I admit you, or will you wait?"

"No," I replied. "It is hardly right to interrupt them. I will walk in the corridor for ten minutes or so, and then you can send the turnkey to let me in."

"Very good," he returned, and left me.

As soon as I was alone, I cautiously advanced up the entry, and stood alongside of the door, through the barred grating of which I was able readily to hear what went on within. The first words I caught were these:—

"And you tell me, Doctor, that, even if a man's windpipe was open, the hanging would kill him,—are you sure?"

"Yes," returned the other, "I believe there would be no doubt of it. I cannot see how escape would be possible; but let me ask you," he went on more gravely, "why you have sent for me to ask all these singular questions. You cannot have the faintest hope of escape, and least of all in such a manner as this. I advise you to think rather on the fate which is inevitable. You must, I fear, have much to reflect upon."

"But," said File, "if I wanted to try this plan of mine, could n't some one be found to help me, say if he was to make twenty thousand or so by it?"

"If you mean me," answered the doctor, "some one cannot be found, neither for twenty nor for fifty thousand dollars. Besides, if any one were wicked enough to venture on such an attempt, he would only be deceiving

you with a hope which would be utterly vain."

I understood all this, with an increasing fear in my mind. The prisoner was cunning enough to want to make sure that I was not playing him false.

After a pause, he said, "Well, Doctor, you know a poor devil in my fix will clutch at straws. Hope I have n't offended you."

"Not the least!" returned the doctor. "Shall I send to Mr. Smith?" This was my present name,—in fact I was known as the Rev. Mr. Eliphalet Smith.

"I would like it," answered File; "but as you go out, tell the warden I want to see him immediately about a matter of great importance."

At this stage, I began to conceive very distinctly that the time had arrived when it would be wiser for me to make my escape, if this step were yet possible. Accordingly I waited until I heard the doctor rise, and at once stepped quietly away to the far end of the corridor, which I had scarcely reached when the door which closed it was opened by a turnkey who had come to relieve the doctor. Of course my own peril was imminent. If the turnkey mentioned my near presence to the prisoner, immediate disclosure and arrest would follow. If time were allowed for the warden to obey the request from File, that he would visit him at once, I might gain thus half an hour, but hardly more. I therefore said to the officer: "Tell the warden that the doctor wishes to remain an hour longer with the prisoner, and that I shall return myself at the end of that time."

"Very good, sir," said the turnkey, allowing me to pass out, and relocking the door; "I'll tell him."

In a few moments I was outside of the jail gate, and saw my fellow-clergyman, Mr. Stagers, in full broadcloth and white tie, coming down the street towards me. As usual he was on guard; but this time he had to deal with a man grown perfectly desperate, with everything to win, and nothing to lose. My

plans were made, and, wild as they were, I thought them worth the trying. I must evade this man's terrible watch. How keen it was, you cannot imagine; but it was aided by three of the infamous gang to which File had belonged, for without these spies no one person could possibly have sustained so perfect a system.

I took Stagers's arm. "What time," said I, "does the first train start for Dayton?"

"At twelve," said the other; "what do you want?"

"How far is it?" I continued. I, "About fifteen miles," he replied.

"Good; I can get back by eight o'clock to-night."

"Easily," said Stagers, "if you go. What is it you want?"

"I want," said I, "a smaller tube, to put in the windpipe. Must have it, in fact."

"Well, I don't like it," said he, "but the thing's got to go through somehow. If you must go, I will go along myself. Can't lose sight of you, Doc, just at present. You're monstrous precious. Did you tell File?"

"Yes," said I. "He's all right. Come. We've no time to lose." Nor had we. Within twenty minutes we were seated in the last car of a long train, and running at the rate of twenty miles an hour towards Dayton. In about ten minutes I asked Stagers for a cigar.

"Can't smoke here," said he.

"No," I answered; "I'll go forward into the smoking-car."

"Come along, then," said he, and we went through the train accordingly. I was not sorry he had gone with me when I found in the smoking-car one of the spies who had been watching me so constantly. Stagers nodded to him and grinned at me, and we sat down together.

"Chut," said I, "dropped my cigar. Left it on the window-ledge, in the hindmost car. Be back in a moment." This time, for a wonder, Stagers allowed me to leave unaccompanied. I hastened through to the back car, and gained the



platform at its nearer end, where I instantly cut the signal cord. Then I knelt down, and, waiting until the two cars ran together, I removed the connecting pin. The next moment I leaped to my feet, and screwed up the brake wheel, so as to check the pace of the car. Instantly the distance widened between me and the flying train. A few moments more, and the pace of my own car slackened, while the hurrying train flew around a distant curve. I did not wait for my own car to stop entirely before I slipped down off the steps, leaving the other passengers to dispose of themselves as they might until their absence should be discovered and the rest of the train return.

As I wish rather to illustrate my very remarkable professional career, than to amuse by describing its mere incidents, I shall not linger to tell how I succeeded, at last, in reaching St. Louis. Fortunately, I had never ceased to anticipate a moment when escape from File and his friends would be possible, so that I always carried about with me the funds with which I had hastily provided myself upon leaving. The whole amount did not exceed a hundred dollars; but with this, and a gold watch worth as much more, I hoped to be able to subsist until my own ingenuity enabled me to provide more liberally for the future. Naturally enough, I scanned the papers closely, to discover some account of File's death, and of the disclosures concerning myself which he was only too likely to have made. I met with a full account of his execution, but with no allusion to myself, an omission which I felt fearful was due only to a desire on the part of the police to avoid alarming me in such a way as to keep them from pouncing upon me on my way home. Be this as it may, from that time to the present hour I have remained ignorant as to whether or not the villain betrayed my part in that curious coroner's inquest.

Before many days I had resolved to make another and a bold venture. Accordingly appeared in the St. Louis

papers an advertisement to the effect that Dr. Von Ingenhoff, the well-known German physician, who had spent two years on the plains acquiring a knowledge of Indian medicine, was prepared to treat all diseases by vegetable remedies alone. Dr. Von Ingenhoff would remain in St. Louis for two weeks, and was to be found at the Grayson House every day from ten until two o'clock.

To my delight I got two patients the first day. The next I had twice as many; when at once I hired two connecting rooms, and made a very useful arrangement, which I may describe dramatically in the following way.

There being two or three patients waiting while I finish my cigar and morning julep, there enters a respectable looking old gentleman, who inquires briskly of the patients if this is really Dr. Von Ingenhoff's. He is told it is.

"Ah," says he, "I shall be delighted to see him; five years ago I was scalped on the plains, and now"—exhibiting a well-covered head—"you see what the Doctor did for me. 'Tis n't any wonder I've come fifty miles to see him. Any of you been scalped, gentlemen?"

To none of them had this misfortune arrived as yet; but, like most folks in the lower ranks of life and some in the upper ones, it was pleasant to find a genial person who would listen to their account of their own symptoms. Presently, after hearing enough, the old gentleman pulls out a large watch. "Bless me! it's late. I must call again. May I trouble you, sir, to say to the Doctor that his old friend, Governor Brown, called to see him, and will drop in again to-morrow. Don't forget: Governor Brown of Arkansas." A moment later the Governor visited me by a side-door, with his account of the symptoms of my patients. Enter a tall Hoosier,—the Governor having retired. "Now, Doc," says Hoosier, "I've been handled awful these two years back." "Stop," I exclaim, "open your eyes. There now, let me see," taking his

pulse as I speak. "Ah, you've a pain there, and you can't sleep. Cocktails don't agree any longer. Weren't you bit by a dog two years' ago?" "I was," says the Hoosier, in amazement. "Sir," I reply, "you have chronic hydrophobia. It's the water in the cocktails that disagrees with you. My bitters will cure in a week, sir."

The astonishment of my friend at these accurate revelations may be imagined. He is allowed to wait for his medicine in the ante-room, where the chances are in favor of his relating how wonderfully I had told all his symptoms at a glance.

Governor Brown of Arkansas was a small but clever actor, whom I met in the billiard-room, and who, day after day, in varying disguises and modes, played off the same trick, to our great mutual advantage.

At my friend's suggestion, we very soon added to our resources by the purchase of two electro-magnetic batteries. This special means of treating all classes of maladies has advantages which are altogether peculiar. In the first place, you instruct your patient that the treatment is of necessity a long one. A striking mode of putting it is to say, "Sir, you have been six months getting ill, it will require six months for a cure." There is a correct sound about such a phrase, and it is sure to satisfy. Two sittings a week, at three dollars a sitting, pays pretty well. In many cases the patient gets well while you are electrifying him. Whether or not the electricity cures him is a thing I shall never know. If, however, he begins to show signs of impatience, you advise him that he will require a year's treatment, and suggest that it will be economical for him to buy a battery and use it at home. Under this advice he pays you twenty dollars for an instrument which cost you ten, and you are rid of a troublesome case.

If the reader has followed me closely, he will have learned that I am a man of large views in my profession, and of

a very justifiable ambition. The idea had often occurred to me of combining in one establishment all the various modes of practice which are known as irregular. This, as will be understood, is merely a more liberal rendering of the same idea which prompted me to unite in my own business homeopathy and the ordinary practice of medicine. I proposed to my partner, accordingly, to combine with our present business that of spiritualism, which I knew had been very profitably turned to account in connection with medical practice. As soon as he agreed to this plan, which, by the way, I hoped to enlarge, so as to include all the available isms, I set about making such preparations as were necessary. I remembered to have read somewhere, that a Doctor Schiff had shown that you could produce remarkably clever knockings, so called, by voluntarily dislocating the great toe and then forcibly drawing it back again into its socket. A still better noise could be made by throwing the tendon of the peroneus longus muscle out of the hollow in which it lies, alongside of the ankle. After some effort I was able to accomplish both feats quite readily, and could occasion a remarkable variety of sounds, according to the power which I employed or the positions which I occupied at the time. As to all other matters, I trusted to the suggestions of my own ingenuity, which, as a rule, has rarely failed me.

The largest success attended the novel plan which my lucky genius had devised; so that soon we actually began to divide large profits, and to lay by a portion of our savings. It is, of course, not to be supposed that this desirable result was attained without many annoyances and some positive danger. My spiritual revelations, medical and other, were, as may be supposed, only more or less happy guesses; but in this, as in predictions as to the weather and other events, the rare successes always get more prominence in the minds of men than the numerous fail-



ures. Moreover, whenever a person has been fool enough to resort to folks like myself, he is always glad to be able to defend his conduct by bringing forward every possible proof of skill on the part of the man he has consulted. These considerations, and a certain love of mysterious or unusual means, I have commonly found sufficient to secure an ample share of gullible individuals; while I may add, that, as a rule, those who would be shrewd enough to understand and expose us are wise enough to keep away altogether. Such as did come were, as a rule, easy enough to manage, but now and then we hit upon some utterly exceptional patient, who was both fool enough to consult me and clever enough to know he had been swindled. When such a fellow made a fuss, it was occasionally necessary to return his money, if it was found impossible to bully him into silence. In one or two instances, where I had promised a cure upon prepayment of two or three hundred dollars, I was either sued or threatened with suit, and had to refund a part or the whole of the amount; but most folks preferred to hold their tongues, rather than expose to the world the extent of their own folly.

In one case I suffered personally to a degree which I never can recall without a distinct sense of annoyance, both at my own want of care and at the disgusting consequences which it brought upon me.

Early one morning an old gentleman called, in a state of the utmost agitation, and explained that he desired to consult the spirits as to a heavy loss which he had experienced the night before. He had left, he said, a sum of money in his pantaloons-pocket, upon going to bed. In the morning he had changed his clothes, and gone out, forgetting to remove the notes. Returning in an hour in great haste, he discovered that the garment still lay upon the chair where he had thrown it, but that the money was missing. I at once desired him to be

seated, and proceeded to ask him certain questions, in a chatty way, about the habits of his household, the amount lost, and the like, expecting thus to get some clew which would enable me to make my spirits display the requisite share of sagacity in pointing out the thief. I learned readily that he was an old and wealthy man, a little close too, I suspected; and that he lived in a large house, with but two servants, and an only son about twenty-one years old. The servants were both elderly women, who had lived in the household many years, and were probably innocent. Unluckily, remembering my own youthful career, I presently reached the conclusion that the young man had been the delinquent. When I ventured to inquire a little as to his character and habits, the old gentleman cut me very short, remarking that he came to ask questions, and not to be questioned, and that he desired at once to consult the spirits. Upon this I sat down at a table, and, after a brief silence, demanded in a solemn voice if there were present any spirits. By industriously cracking my big-toe joint, I was enabled to represent at once the presence of a numerous assembly of these worthies. Then I inquired if any one of them had been present when the robbery was effected. A prompt double-knock replied in the affirmative. I may say here, by the way, that the unanimity of the spirits as to their use of two knocks for yes, and one for no, is a very remarkable point; and shows, if it shows anything, how perfect and universal must be the social intercourse of the respected departed. It is worthy of note, also, that if the spirit, I will not say the medium, perceives, after one knock, that it were wiser to say yes, he can conveniently add the second tap. Some such arrangement in real life would, it appears to me, be very desirable.

To return to the subject. As soon as I explained that the spirit who answered had been a witness of the theft, the old man became strangely agitated. "Who was it?" said he. At once the

spirit indicated a desire to use the alphabet. As we went over the letters, (always a slow method, but useful when you want to observe excitable people,) my visitor kept saying, "Quicker. Go quicker." At length the spirit spelt out the words, "I know not his name." "Was it," said the gentleman, — "was it a — was it one of my household?" I knocked yes, without hesitation; who else could it have been? "Excuse me," he went on, "if I ask you for a little wine." This I gave him. He continued, "Was it Susan, or Ellen? answer instantly."

"No, — No."

"Was it —" He paused. "If I ask a question mentally, will the spirits reply?" I knew what he meant. He wanted to ask if it was his son, but did not wish to speak openly.

"Ask," said I.

"I have," he returned.

I hesitated. It was rarely my policy to commit myself definitely; yet here I fancied, from the facts of the case, and his own terrible anxiety, that he suspected or more than suspected his son as the guilty person. I became sure of this as I studied his face. At all events it would be easy to deny or explain, in case of trouble; and after all, what slander was there in two knocks! I struck twice as usual.

Instantly the old gentleman rose up, very white, but quite firm. "There," he said, and cast a bank-note on the table, "I thank you"; — and bending his head on his breast, walked, as I thought with great effort, out of the room.

On the following morning, as I made my first appearance in my outer room, which contained at least a dozen persons awaiting advice, who should I see standing by the window but the old gentleman with sandy-gray hair. Along with him was a stout young man, with a decided red head, and mustache and whiskers to match. Probably the son, thought I, — ardent temperament, remorse, — come to confess, etc. Except as to the temper, I was never more mistaken in my life. I was about

to go regularly through my patients, when the old gentleman began to speak.

"I called, Doctor," said he, "to explain the little matter about which I — about which I —"

"Troubled your spirits yesterday," added the youth jocosely, pulling his mustache.

"Beg pardon," I returned. "Had we not better talk this over in private? Come into my office," I added, touching the lad on the arm.

Would you believe it? — he took out his handkerchief, and dusted the place I had touched. "Better not," he said. "Go on, father; let us get done with this den."

"Gentlemen," said the elder person, addressing the patients, "I called here yesterday, like a fool, to ask who had stolen from me a sum of money, which I believed I left in my room on going out in the morning. This doctor here and his spirits contrived to make me suspect my only son. Well, I charged him at once with the crime, as soon as I got back home; and what do you think he did. He said, 'Father, let us go up stairs and look for it, and —'"

Here the young man broke in with "Come, father, don't worry yourself for nothing"; and then, turning, added, "To cut the thing short, he found the notes under his candlestick, where he had left them on going to bed. This is all of it. We came here to stop this fellow" (by which he meant me) "from carrying a slander further. I advise you, good people, to profit by the matter, and to look up a more honest doctor, if doctoring be what you want."

As soon as he had ended, I remarked solemnly: "The words of the spirits are not my words. Who shall hold them accountable?"

"Nonsense," said the young man. "Come, father," and they left the room.

Now was the time to retrieve my character. "Gentlemen," said I, "you have heard this very singular account. Trusting the spirits utterly and entirely as I do, it occurs to me that there is no reason why they may not after all have been right in their sus-



picious of this young person. Who can say that, overcome by remorse, he may not have seized the time of his father's absence to replace the money?"

To my amazement up gets a little old man from the corner. "Well, you are a low cuss," said he; and, taking up a basket beside him, hobbled out of the room. You may be sure I said some pretty sharp things to him, for I was out of humor to begin with, and it is one thing to be insulted by a stout young man, and quite another to be abused by a wretched old cripple. However, he went away, and I supposed, for my part, that I was done with the whole business.

An hour later, however, I heard a rough knock at my door, and, opening it hastily, saw my red-headed young man with the cripple.

"Now," said the former, catching me by the collar, and pulling me into the room among my patients, "I want to know, my man, if this doctor said that it was likely I was the thief, after all?"

"That's what he said," replied the cripple; "just about that, sir."

I do not desire to dwell on the after conduct of this hot-headed young man. It was the more disgraceful, as I offered but little resistance, and endured a beating such as I would have hesitated to inflict upon a dog. Nor was this all; he warned me that, if I dared to remain in the city after a week, he would shoot me. In the East I should have thought but little of such a threat, but here it was only too likely to be practically carried out. Accordingly, with much grief and reluctance, I collected my whole fortune, which now amounted to at least seven thousand dollars, and turned my back upon this ungrateful town. I am sorry to say that I also left behind me the last of my good luck, as hereafter I was to encounter only one calamity after another.

Travelling slowly eastward, my spirits began at last to rise to their usual level, and when I arrived in Boston I set myself to thinking how best I could contrive to enjoy life, and at the same time to increase my means.

On former occasions I was a moneyless adventurer; now I possessed sufficient capital, and was able and ready to embark in whatever promised the best returns with the smallest personal risk. Several schemes presented themselves as worthy the application of industry and talent, but none of them altogether suited my tastes. I thought at times of travelling as a Physiological Lecturer, combining with it the business of a practitioner. Scare the audience at night with an enumeration of symptoms which belong to ten out of every dozen of healthy people, and then doctor such of them as are gulls enough to consult me next day. The bigger the fright, the better the pay. I was a little timid, however, about facing large audiences, as a man will be naturally if he has lived a life of adventure, so that, upon due consideration, I gave up the idea altogether.

The patent-medicine business also looked well enough, but it is somewhat overdone at all times, and requires a heavy outlay, with the possible result of ill-success. Indeed, I believe fifty quack remedies fail for one that succeeds; and millions must have been wasted in placards, bills, and advertisements, which never returned half their value to the speculator. If I live, I think I shall beguile my time with writing the lives of the principal quacks who have met with success. They are few in number, after all, as any one must know who recalls the countless remedies which are puffed awhile on the fences, and disappear to be heard of no more.

Lastly, I inclined for a while to undertake a private insane asylum, which appeared to me to offer facilities for money-making; as to which, however, I may have been deceived by the writings of certain popular novelists. I went so far, I may say, as actually to visit Concord for the purpose of finding a pleasant locality and a suitable atmosphere; but, upon due reflection, abandoned my plan as involving too much personal labor to suit one of my easy frame of mind.

Tired at last of idleness and of lounging on the Common, I engaged in two or three little ventures of a semi-professional character, such as an exhibition of laughing-gas; advertising to cure cancer; send ten stamps by mail to J. B., and receive an infallible receipt, etc. I did not find, however, that these little enterprises prospered well in New England, and I had recalled to me very forcibly a story which my grandfather was fond of relating to me in my boyhood. It briefly narrated how certain very knowing flies went to get molasses, and how it ended by the molasses getting them. This, indeed, was precisely what happened to me in all my little efforts to better myself in the Northern States, until at length my misfortunes climaxed in total and unexpected ruin.

The event which deprived me of the hard-won earnings of years of ingenious industry was brought about by the baseness of a man who was concerned with me in purchasing drugs for exportation to the Confederate States. Unluckily, I was obliged to employ as my agent a long-legged seacaptain from Maine. With his aid, I invested in this enterprise about six thousand dollars, which I reasonably hoped to quadruple. Our arrangements were cleverly made to run the blockade at Charleston, and we were to sail on a certain Thursday morning in September, 1863. I sent my clothes on board, and went down the evening before to go on board, but found that the little schooner had been hauled out from the pier. The captain, who met me at this time, endeavored to get a boat in order to ferry us to the ship, but the night was stormy, and we were obliged to return to our lodgings. Early next day I dressed and went to the captain's room, which proved to be empty. I was instantly filled with doubt, and ran frantically to the foot of Long Wharf, where, to my horror, I could see no signs of schooner or captain. Neither have I ever again set eyes on them from that time to this.

I immediately lodged information with the police as to the unpatriotic designs of the rascal who had swindled me, but whether or not justice ever overtook him I am unable to say.

It was, as I perceived, such utterly spilt milk as to be little worth lamenting; and I therefore set to work with my accustomed energy to utilize on my own behalf the resources of my medical education, which so often before had saved me from want. The war, then raging at its height, appeared to me to offer numerous opportunities to men of talent. The path which I chose myself was apparently a humble one, but it enabled me to make very agreeable use of my professional knowledge, and afforded rapid and secure returns, without any other investment than a little knowledge cautiously employed. In the first place, I deposited my small remnant of property in a safe bank, and then proceeded to Providence, where, as I had heard, patriotic persons were giving very large bounties in order, I suppose, to insure to the government the services of better men than themselves. On my arrival I lost no time in offering myself as a substitute, and was readily accepted, and very soon mustered into the Twentieth Rhode Island. Three months were passed in camp, during which period I received bounties to the extent of six hundred and fifty dollars, with which I tranquilly deserted about two hours before the regiment left for the field. With the product of my industry I returned to Boston, and deposited all but enough to carry me to New York, where within a month I enlisted twice, earning on each occasion four hundred dollars.

My next essay was in Philadelphia, which I approached, even after some years of absence, with a good deal of doubt. It was an ill-omened place for me; for although I got nearly seven hundred dollars by entering the service as a substitute for an editor, — whose pen, I presume, was mightier than his sword, — I was disagreeably surprised by being hastily forwarded to the front



under a foxy young lieutenant, who brutally shot down a poor devil in the streets of Baltimore for attempting to desert. At this point I began to make use of my medical skill, for I did not in the least degree fancy being shot, either because of deserting or of not deserting. It happened, therefore, that a day or two later, while in Washington, I was seized in the street with a fit, which perfectly imposed upon the officer in charge, and caused him to leave me at the Douglas Hospital. Here I found it necessary to perform fits about twice a week; and as there were several real epileptics in the wards I had a capital chance of studying their symptoms, which finally I learned to imitate with the utmost cleverness.

I soon got to know three or four men, who, like myself, were personally averse to bullets, and who were simulating other forms of disease with more or less success. One of them suffered with rheumatism of the back, and walked about bent like an old man; another, who had been to the front, was palsied in the left arm; and a third kept open an ulcer on the leg, by rubbing in a little antimonial ointment, which I sold him at five dollars a box, and bought at fifty cents.

A change in the hospital staff brought all of us to grief. The new surgeon was a quiet, gentlemanly person, with pleasant blue eyes and clearly cut features, and a way of looking you through without saying much. I felt so safe myself that I watched his procedures with just that kind of enjoyment which one clever man takes in seeing another at work.

The first inspection settled two of us.

"Another back case," said the ward surgeon to his senior.

"Back hurt you?" says the latter, mildly.

"Yes, sir; run over by a howitzer; ain't never been straight since."

"A howitzer!" says the surgeon. "Lean forward, my man, so as to touch the floor,—so. That will do." Then, turning to his aid, he said, "Prepare this man's discharge papers."

"His discharge, sir?"

"Yes, I said that. Who's next?"

"Thank you, sir," groaned the man with the back. "How soon, sir, do you think it will be?"

"Ah, not less than a month," replied the surgeon, and passed on.

Now as it was unpleasant to be bent like a letter V, and as the patient presumed that his discharge was secure, he naturally took to himself a little relaxation in the way of becoming straighter. Unluckily, those nice blue eyes were everywhere at all hours; and, one fine morning, Smithson was appalled at finding himself in a detachment bound for the field, and bearing on his descriptive list an ill-natured endorsement about his malady.

The surgeon came next on O'Callahan. "Where's your cap, my man?"

"On my head, yer honor," said the other, insolently. "I've a paralytics in my arm."

"Humph!" cried the surgeon. "You have another hand."

"An' it's not rigulation to saloot with yer left," said the Irishman, with a grin, while the patients around us began to laugh.

"How did it happen?" said the surgeon.

"I was shot in the shoulder," answered the patient, "about three months ago, sir. I have n't stirred it since."

The surgeon looked at the scar.

"So recently?" said he. "The scar looks older; and, by the way, doctor," to his junior, "it could not have gone near the nerves. Bring the battery, orderly."

In a few moments the surgeon was testing, one after another, the various muscles. At last he stopped. "Send this man away with the next detachment. Not a word, my man. You are a rascal, and a disgrace to these good fellows who have been among the bullets."

The man muttered something, I did not hear what.

"Put this man in the guard-house," cried the surgeon; and so passed on, without smile or frown.

As to the ulcer case, to my amusement he was put in bed, and his leg locked up in a wooden splint, which effectually prevented him from touching the part diseased. It healed in ten days, and he too went as food for powder.

As for myself, he asked me a few questions, and, requesting to be sent for my next fit, left me alone.

I was of course on my guard, and took care to have my attacks only in his absence, or to have them over before he arrived.

At length, one morning, in spite of my care, he chanced to be in the ward, when I fell at the door. I was carried in and laid on a bed, apparently in strong convulsions. Presently I felt a finger on my eyelid, and as it was raised, saw the surgeon standing beside me. To escape his scrutiny, I became more violent in my motions. He stopped a moment, and looked at me steadily. "Poor fellow!" said he, to my great relief, as I felt at once that I had successfully deceived him. Then he turned to the ward doctor and remarked: "Take care he does not hurt his head against the bed; and, by the by, doctor, do you remember the test we applied in Smith's case? Just tickle the soles of his feet, and see if it will cause those backward spasms of the head."

The aid obeyed him, and, very naturally, I jerked my head backwards as hard as I could.

"That will answer," said the surgeon, to my horror. "A clever rogue. Send him to the guard-house when he gets over it."

"Happy had I been if my ill-luck had ended here; but, as I crossed the yard, an officer stopped me. To my disgust it was the captain of my old Rhode Island company.

"Halloa!" said he; "keep that fellow safe. I know him."

To cut short a long story; I was tried, convicted, and forced to refund the Rhode Island bounty, for by ill luck they found my bank-book among my papers. I was finally sent to Fort

Mifflin for a year, and kept at hard labor, handling and carrying shot, policing the ground, picking up cigar-stumps, and other like unpleasant occupations.

Upon my release, I went at once to Boston, where I had about two thousand dollars in bank. I spent nearly all of the latter sum before I could prevail upon myself to settle down to some mode of making a livelihood; and I was about to engage in business as a vender of lottery policies, when I first began to feel a strange sense of lassitude, which soon increased so as quite to disable me from work of any kind. Month after month passed away, while my money lessened, and this terrible sense of weariness still went on from bad to worse. At last one day, after nearly a year had elapsed, I perceived on my face a large brown patch of color, in consequence of which I went in some alarm to consult a well-known physician. He asked me a multitude of tiresome questions, and at last wrote off a prescription, which I immediately read. It was a preparation of iron.

"What do you think," said I, "is the matter with me, doctor?"

"I am afraid," said he, "that you have a very serious trouble,—what we call Addison's disease."

"What's that?" said I.

"I do not think you would comprehend it," he replied. "It is an affection of the supra-renal capsules.

I dimly remembered that there were such organs, and that nobody knew what they were meant for. It seemed the doctors had found a use for them at last.

"Is it a dangerous disease?" I said.

"I fear so," he answered.

"Don't you know," I asked, "what's the truth about it?"

"Well," he returned gravely, "I am sorry to tell you it is a very dangerous malady."

"Nonsense," said I, "I don't believe it,"—for I thought it was only a doctor's trick, and one I had tried often enough myself.

"Thank you," said he, "you are a



very ill man, and a fool besides. Good morning." He forgot to ask for a fee, and I remembered not to offer one.

Several months went by; my money was gone; my clothes were ragged, and, like my body, nearly worn out; and I am an inmate of a hospital. To-day I feel weaker than when I first began to write. How it will end I do not know. If I die, the doctor will get this pleasant history; and if I live, I shall burn it, and, as soon as I get a little money, I will set out to look for my little sister, about whom I dreamed last night.

What I dreamed was not very agreeable. I thought I was walking up one of the vilest streets near my old office, when a girl spoke to me, — a shameless, worn creature, with great sad eyes, not so wicked as the rest of her face. Suddenly she screamed aloud, "Brother! Brother!" and then, remembering what she had been, — with her round, girlish, innocent face, and fair hair, — and seeing what she was, I awoke, and cursed myself in the darkness for the evil I had done in the days of my youth.

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### "THE LIE."

MANY years ago — now more than two hundred and fifty — some one in England wrote a short poem bearing the above emphatic title, which deservedly holds a place in the collections of old English poetry at the present day. It is a striking production, familiar, no doubt, to most lovers of ancient verse, and, although numbering only about a dozen stanzas, has outlasted many a ponderous folio.

I say, indefinitely enough, that this little poem was written by *some* one, and strange as it may appear, the name of that one is still in doubt. Its authorship was attributed, by Bishop Percy and others, to Sir Walter Raleigh, and sometimes with the fanciful addition, that he wrote it the night before his execution. The piece, however, was extant many years before the world was disgraced by that deed of wickedness.

After a while it began to be questioned whether the verses were really written by Sir Walter. Some old-poetry mouser appears to have lighted on an ancient folio volume, the work of Joshua Sylvester, and found among its contents a poem called "The Soul's Errand," which, it would seem, was thought to be the same that had been

credited to Sir Walter Raleigh under the title of "The Lie."

Joshua Sylvester was in his day a writer of some note. Colley Cibber, in his "Lives of the Poets," is quite lavish in his praise, and says his brethren in the sacred art called him the "Silver-tongued." The same phrase has been applied to others.

In his "Specimens of Early English Poets," Ellis "restores" the poem, with the title of "The Soul's Errand," to Sylvester, as its "ancient proprietor, till a more authorized claimant shall be produced."

Chambers, in his "Cyclopædia of English Literature," prints the poem, with the title of "The Soul's Errand," and he also gives it to Sylvester, "as the now generally received author of an impressive piece, long ascribed to Raleigh."

Sir Egerton Brydges, in his "Censura Literaria," doubts Percy's right to credit Sir Walter with the poem of "The Lie," of which he says there is a "parody" in the folio edition of Sylvester's works, where it is entitled "The Soul's Errand."

The veteran J. Payne Collier, the *emendator* of Shakespeare, has recently put forth a work, in four volumes, en-